

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 07202 100413Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 /089 W
-----074487 101206Z /46

R 091114Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9895
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 7202

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, AF, SK
SUBJ: SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY WORRIED ABOUT FUTURE OF AFGHAN-SOUTH
KOREAN RELATIONS

REF: KABUL 3958

1. SUMMARY: THE SMALL SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY IN KABUL IS BEGINNING
TO WORRY ABOUT ITS FUTURE, AS WELL AS THE OUTLOOK FOR AFGHAN-KOREAN
RELATIONS. END SUMMARY

2. ACCORDING TO THE SOUTH KOREAN DCM, THE NEW AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE,
JIN CHULL SOH, HAS BEEN WAITING IN KABUL SINCE AUGUST 21 (19 DAYS)
TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS. THIS IS THE LONGEST TIME AN AMBASSADOR-
DESIGNATE HAS BEEN KEPT WAITING SINCE THE NEW GOVERNMENT SIEZED
POWER, AND THE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE HAS BEEN GIVEN NO INFORMATION
AS TO WHEN THE CEREMONY IS LIKELY TO OCCUR. THE AMBASSADOR WAS
SUCCESSFUL, HOWEVER, IN MAKING HIS OBLIGATORY, PRELIMINARY CALL
ON FOREIGN MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN ON AUGUST 25.

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PAGE 02 KABUL 07202 100413Z

3. THE SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY TAKES SOME COMFORT FROM WHAT THEY
REGARD AS THE "FACT" THAT NO OTHER AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE HAS
ARRIVED SINCE SOH AND PRESENTED CREDENTIALS AHEAD OF HIM. THIS IS
A DOUBTFUL POINT, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE NEW MEXICAN AMBASSADOR, WHO
IS RESIDENT IN NEW DELHI, WAS ABLE TO MAKE A QUICK TRIP TO KABUL
TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS ON AUGUST 23. WE, OF COURSE, HAVE NO
WAY OF KNOWING HOW LONG IN ADVANCE THIS CEREMONY HAD BEEN

SCHEDULED.

4. ANOTHER WORRISOME SIGN IS THAT, IN CONTRAST TO THE TREATMENT GIVEN OTHER ARRIVING AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATES, THERE WAS NO MENTION IN THE CONTROLLED PRESS THAT THE SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE HAD ARRIVED.

5. THIRDLY, WHEN THE PREVIOUS AMBASSADOR, MEUNG JUN CHOI, DEPARTED IN LATE JULY, HE WAS UNSUCCESSFUL IN PAYING THE CUSTOMARY FAREWELL CALLS ON FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN AND PRIME MINISTER TARAHI. THE EXPLANATION GIVEN HIM WAS THAT THEY WERE TOO BUSY TO SEE HIM.

6. FOURTHLY, THE NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN NO ACTION TO ACCREDIT ITS NEW RESIDENT AMBASSADOR TO TOKYO TO SEOUL AS WELL, AS HAS BEEN CUSTOMARY IN THE PAST. THE AFGHAN AMBASSADOR ARRIVED IN TOKYO THREE MONTHS AGO. WHENEVER THE SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY HAS ASKED THE AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT ITS INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD, IT HAS RECEIVED EQUIVOCAL ANSWERS.

7. LASTLY, THE SOUTH KOREANS ARE ALSO DISTURBED ABOUT RECENT FOREIGN POLICY SPEECHES BY AMIN, CALLING, INTER ALIA, FOR THE UNIFICATION OF KOREA AND THE REMOVAL OF "FOREIGN TROOPS" FROM SOUTH KOREA.

8. COMMENT: WHEN THE NEW LEFTIST AFGHAN GOVERNMENT CAME TO POWER IN APRIL, ONE OF ITS SURPRISING ACTIONS WAS PUBLICLY TO SOLICIT
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PAGE 03 KABUL 07202 100413Z

AND ACCEPT RECOGNITION OF SOUTH KOREA AND PERMIT COURTESY CALLS BY AMBASSADOR CHOI ON THE PRINCIPAL CABINET MINISTER. INDEED, THE SOUTH KOREANS BEAT THE NORTH KOREANS BY SEVERAL DAYS IN RECOGNIZING THE NEW KABUL REGIME. AMBASSADOR CHOI WAS VERY GRATIFIED BY THESE GESTURES (SEE REFTEL), SINCE, ACCORDING TO HIM, NO OTHER "RADICAL LEFTIST" REGIME IN THE WORLD HAD EVER RECOGNIZED SOUTH KOREA. THE RECENT TURN OF EVENTS HAS, HOWEVER, DISCOURAGED THE EMBASSY, LEADING IT TO BE WORRIED ABOUT ITS FUTURE.
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